

# **The Litany of Suffering is Still Heard But Not Louder: A Case Study of Clinical Supervision to School Libraries in Indonesia's Four Provinces.**

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## **Abstract**

From 2002 through 2004, the National Library of Indonesia distributed block grants to 250 school libraries in the province of Central Java scattered in 10 districts, 150 school libraries in West Nusa Tenggara for 7 districts, 125 school libraries in South Sumatera in 5 districts while in the province of Bangka Belitung only to one municipality covering 25 school libraries. For three years, a school library which serves only one school received a block grant of 19 million rupiahs or approximately US \$2000, while (multiple) school library which serves two or more schools received 29 million rupiahs or around US 3200 all for books. Beside that, there are trainings for library staffs conducted at the province capital as well as at the districts and supervision from the National Library. After three year implementation, the National Library set up two independent teams to evaluate the school library performance, block grant awardees. The first team consists of five consultant on education and librarianship while the second one is an independent consultant bureau. Among the findings are the rise of book usages among school children, rising initiatives among teacher cum teacher in charge of library to correlate the library activities with the class programme and communities' activities, the provision of separate building for school library especially in South Sumatera. However there anxieties on the continuation of the school libraries after the project is over, as not all grant-receiving-districts have enough budget to provide finances for the school library operations after the project is over.

## **Key words**

Indonesia

World Bank

Central Java

South Sumatera

School libraries

Teacher librarian

Bangka Belitung

West Nusa Tenggara

## **1. Introduction**

The National Library of Indonesia (hereafter called NLI) has various objectives, one of them is to assist the development of libraries in Indonesia. In order to develop school libraries NLI launched a project for developing school and public libraries. The project is a part of implementation phase as agreed between the Government of Indonesia and the World Bank. The loan is a soft one, a part of Learning and Innovation Loan.

In accord with NLI vision in empowering library to support formal education and life long learning, NLI created a project called Project for the Development of Public and School Libraries in Indonesia with the concept to utilize community and school libraries to support life long learning. For the would-be-block-grant-receivers, NLI appointed three provinces, each one representing an area of Indonesia. Those are South Sumatera representing western Indonesia, Central Java representing Central Indonesia [sic] and

West Nusa Tenggara representing eastern Indonesia. Latter on Bangka-Belitung became a new province parted from South Sumatera.

The requirement for the receiving school library are as follows:

(a) The school library has good relations with the surrounding communities such as with the mass organisations, boy and girl scout movement, etc.

(b) The people in charge of the library possessed at least minimum graduates of Juniro High School (class 12)<sup>1</sup>

© The minimum library space is 9 meter square

(d) The school has been existed for at least one year

(d) The minimum collection is 50 books excluding textbook and book packages distributed by the government.

(e) The student population at least 100 students.

The selection is conducted by Provincial Library and decided by NLI. Although the project covers also community libraries, this paper concentrates mainly to school libraries.

Table 1. Block grant receiver for school libraries.

#	Province	Number of districts	Number of school libraries
1	South Sumatera	5	125
2	Bangka Belitung	1	25
3	Central Java	10	250
4	West Nusa Tenggara	6	150

Source : Library development Project NLI (2004)

The term district actually including municipal –in Bahasa Indonesia known as *kota* – and regency, in Bahasa Indonesia known as *kabupaten* which is more or less equal to county in US.. The term district applied to all parts of this paper.

## 2. Training preparation

As a part of its activities, the project conducted four-province-wide Training of Trainers (TOT) in Jakarta. The participants are would-be-trainers in each province while the lecturers are Education and Training Consultants, a five-person-team.

The participants are appointed by the Provincial Library. The training materials consists of report writing, information organisation, library management, library service marketing. The obvious difficulties lies in the participants' background. Although most of them are librarian by profession, still some of them are newly appointed head librarians for public libraries but without library science background. This situation happened owing to the launched regional autonomy policy by the government in which each province, municipality, town, county, district have an independent policy in arranging their house keeping matters except in the field of judicial, police, military, foreign relation, monetary matters. Hence some participants at the TOT programme have various background, ranging from school teachers to family planning supervisor until public market director!

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<sup>1</sup> This requirements are applicable to community libraries and not to school libraries. For school libraries, actually there are no school librarian or teacher-librarian, the only exists is teacher in charge of library, usually appointed by the head master. Almost all of them never got any professional library training.

Each participants got training modules on library materials acquisition, organisations, service and promotion and issues in library development. In lieu of the end users are teachers who will be in charge of library, the training modules given to TOT participants are made as simple as possible. For example, for the classification using DDC, the trainers just use the first or second summary, latter on there are demand for further detail classification which are fulfilled by Third Summary. Even the third summary is considered not enough for school libraries especially notation for Indonesian region. They (school teachers in charge of library) asked further detail for Indonesian geographic notation, alas the NLI does not have good classification for Indonesia<sup>2</sup>!

After the four-province-wide training in Jakarta, the TOT program graduates return to their respective provinces, then train the teachers in charge of library from the districts. These four-province-wide trainers will also train the community facilitators. Community facilitators will assist the school teacher in charge of library<sup>3</sup> in running their libraries as many of the teachers in charge of library have no training in librarianship.

After the training x session is over, the project conducted upgrading course at the provincial level. The Education and Training Consultants supervised the upgrading at the provincial level. The next upgrading course are for beneficiary libraries, conducted at the district attended by schoolmasters, community leaders and library personnel. The trainers are TOT programme graduates while the Education and Training Consultants supervised the implementation programmes.

The upgrading course for the beneficiary libraries is followed by library visits to the beneficiary libraries. Almost all beneficiary-school-libraries are visited albeit various physical and infrastructure obstacles such as crossing the river without bridges, hilly terrain, heat, dust, rough terrains. Most of the input given to Education and Training consultants are library house keeping matters, the difficulty in getting the proper books owing to the non-existence of book shops and satisfaction with the project.

### 3. Implementation

After the training phase, the project then distributed the block grant to the participants for five semesters beginning the year 2002 (Table 1)

Table 1 Financial assistance for the school libraries

Semester	Single school library (In Indonesian rupiahs)	Multiple school library (In Indonesian rupiahs)
I, 2002	5.000.000	7.000.000
II, 2003	3.500.000	5.500.000
III, 2003	3.500.000	5.500.000
IV, 2004	3.500.000	5.500.000
V, 2004	3.500.000	5.500.000

Source: Library Development Project,NLI (2004)

<sup>2</sup> By the time of writing this paper, NLI revised its former classification, adapting to DDC 22 edition.

<sup>3</sup> The term librarian is rather misleading. Actually they are teachers appointed by the school master to run the library besides their normal teaching load. In four provinces they are no administrative personnel who are appointed as school library assistant because the school has no administrative staff and no money to pay the assistant. All administrative affairs are handled by the teachers or school masters.

Single school library means that the school library serves only one school from grade 1 through grade 6 while multiple school library serves two schools or more. For the sake of clarity 1 US \$ is more or less equal to Rp9.500,- The block grants are used for buying books, only 20% are allowed for library stationery supplies.

After the project have been implemented for two and half years, the Library Development Project set up two independent teams to evaluate the project performance. The first team are an independent team appointed based on their proposal to the project while the second one consist of 5 persons which in fact are library education and training consultants. Incidentally these five-person team also the team who taught at the national-level TOT programmes, also supervised the training at the district levels.

#### **4. Performance and Evaluation Team**

Project performance indicators are library usage, library management, user distribution and community support. For school ,library usage are at least 75% of the teachers are regularly borrowed books from the school library and there is an increase of 25% of books borrowed annually. Indicators for library management are there are regular opening hours at least 4 hours during the school days. User distribution indicators cover student participation in assisting the library operations and district support for school libraries. The results are as follows:

(a) Before 2002, only 20% of the teachers who used the library and borrow books. During the implementation phase there is an increase of book-borrowing among the teachers to almost 70% of the total teachers.

(b) An increase in books borrowed by students. Formerly only 15% of the books owned by the library schools are charged out, two and half years the number increased into 45%. This is the result of books procured during the project phase.

( c ) An increase of library (opening) hours more than 4 hours day. Although there in an increase of library hours, there are critics because 50% of the library hours are conducted during the class hours and the students could use the library during the break hours, twice a day @ 15 minutes. The Education and Training consultants criticised the library opening session during the break hours because the break hours are used for physical rest, not for visiting library. Also although there is an increase in post-class-library hours, however many teachers in charge of library complained because of the long hours after school hour mean they have extra works but it does not mean any special financial assistance for them

In all 4 provinces, actually there are no professional librarians at primary school owing to limited school budget. All administrative works are handled by the schoolmaster. For library matters, the schoolmaster appointed one teacher to be responsible on all library matters; sometime there are student assistants to help her/him. Hence the appropriate designation is teacher in charge of library.

(d) An increase of book ownership. This finding is logic because the school libraries have more budget than before the project.

#### **5. Clinical supervision**

Clinical supervision is a supervision to remediate any constraints commonly found in library operations by the teacher in charge of library. The supervision conducted by Education and Training Consultants, began with meeting the Project Implementation Unit, District Library Team who in turn briefed the Community Facilitators on the

purpose of clinical supervision. In order to obtain information, the Consultants distributed questionnaires to teacher in charge of library. Among the questions posed are any obstacles found in each library.

The clinical supervision in each district is preceded by a meeting between the tutor, District Library Team (actually they are personnel from the public library) and Education and Training Consultants in the district capital. The tutors and personnel from the District Library Team then visited the library appointed as the clinical supervision arranger. Education and Training Consultant(s) attended the clinical supervision meetings albeit few hours. At the clinical supervision, the beneficiary libraries submitted the questionnaires. The beneficiary libraries send two personnel at the meeting, one is the schoolmaster while the second one is the teacher in charge of library or the teacher in charge of library substitute because the former teacher in charge of library has relinquished his/her duties to another teacher who is actually the would-be-teacher in charge of library. The supervision clinical meeting conducted at 27 districts, attended also by Education and Training consultants..

### **5.1. Common problems**

Based on the sites visit, question and answer session and questionnaires, the common problems commonly found among the beneficiary libraries are as follows:

#### **(a) Book procurement.**

Although each beneficiary school library got block grants for buying books, getting the right books is another difficulty. In the islands of Sumbawa and Bangka, remote parts of South Sumatera, all the districts have no book shops so that the teacher in charge of library must order the books to book shops located in the province capitals. Most of the good book shops declined the order through postal services as it increases the book shop operational budgets as some of the school libraries situated in remote area, hence the teacher in charge of library must go personally to each book shop. It means that they are willing to travel 8 hours by bus from the eastern part of the island of Sumbawa to Mataram, the province capital of West Nusa Tenggara which in turn there are only 2 good book shops. If the books are not available in Mataram, then the teacher in charge of library will go to Surabaya, the second largest city in Indonesia and it mean 10 hour-travel by night bus! In South Sumatera, teacher in charge of library from outer districts must visit the good bookshop in Palembang which means four to six hour bus trip. Alas the Library Development Project does not provide transportation budget! Such situation is not found in Central Java because the transportation infrastructure better than South Sumatera and West Nusa Tenggara, the distance between school library to district is relative close and many good book shops.

#### **(b) Book processing.**

Although the teacher in charge of library have been trained by the TOT participants, District Library Team and also assisted by Community Facilitators, still there are books that have not been processed properly. For example some error in the acquisition list (the government required that each book must be noted at the central ledger) or the book pocket is not yet pasted, no acquisition number. In Central Java, South Sumatera and Bangka Belitung, teacher in charge of library are generally able to process the books which they got from the project. However, in West Nusa Tenggara, many teaches in charge of library have not registered the acquired books as dictated by the regulation, let alone processing them. Even if the teacher in charge of library has catalogued the books, the books are still not equipped with book card, book pocket, date

due slip. In the districts of Bima and Sumbawa (West Nusa Tenggara) the clinical supervision period is used to process the books, which just the opposite objectives of the supervision to hear directly from the teachers in charge of library about the difficulties they encountered in running the school libraries.

(c ) Lack of library statistics.

Not all beneficiary libraries produced statistics –as required by the projects – on book acquisition, loan and borrowing, library visitors, books lost. For those who produced the library statistics, they proudly installed the library statistics on bulletin board.

(d) Lack of proper library room. This situation is commonly found among libraries in some districts in Central Java and West Nusa Tenggara but not in South Sumatera or Bangka Belitung. The room for library is limited to 3 x 5 metres, most of them are not equipped with chairs. The students read the books on the floors.

(e) Problems with the teacher in charge of library. Almost all teachers in charge of library are school teachers appointed by the schoolmasters to run the library without formal training in librarianship. These teachers in charge of library are not full time school librarians because she or he still teach the regular class. Hence the appointment of teacher in charge of library means extra burden so it is not surprising that there are common book logs, limited library hours.

(f) Problems with bank accounts. The project send the block grants directly to the beneficiary schools who will open the bank account at certain state banks. Alas the banks not always have branches in sub-districts so the teacher in charge of library must come personally to the bank in the districts as not all bank branches have online facilities. Even if the sub-district bank branches are on-line, the electricity at sub-districts is not always reliable, more often there is black-out owing to the shortage of electricity.

## **5.2. Remedial efforts**

After conducting the in-situ clinical supervision, analysing the questionnaires and discussions with District Library Teams, the Education and Training Consultants proposed some solutions to the beneficiary libraries as follows:

(a) Book procurement.

The Education and Training Consultants suggested that book procurement should be coordinated by the public library who will contact the publishers, bookshops and arranges the acquisition. This suggestion has been implemented for districts of Bima and Sumbawa in the island of Sumbawa. For school libraries in Bangka, the Pangkalpinang Public Library invited the book vendors to the public library semi-annual exhibitions which also attended by the teacher in charge of library. On that meeting they will negotiate the buying process and book prices.

(b) Cataloguing and classification are two difficult task for the teacher in charge of library. The Education and Training Consultants suggested a simpler cataloguing procedure. For library house-keeping activities The Education and Training Consultants working together with District Library Team and Community Facilitators solved this problem by teaching the teacher in charge of library in their own libraries. The same approach is applied also for library statistics. The Education and Training consultants also published a simple guide for school library operations.

( c ) The problem of teacher in charge of library is the most difficult task. The school master frequently changes the teacher in charge of library although he or she has been trained for school library operations. In that case the new teacher in charge of library

begins at square one. The Education and Training Consultants suggested that the District Library Team conduct the training regularly for the teacher in charge of library.

There are some efforts to hire library assistant, financed by the school under guidance of School Committee. This practice has been done in Pangkalpinang, province of Bangka Belitung in which School Committee collaborates with village head and other local administration successfully hired library assistant part-time. However, this situation depends on the school capabilities as some of the beneficiary school library are, financially not capable to hire library assistant. As mentioned by some school masters from the rural area, “our school is of poor people where a monthly student fee of Rp1000 or about 10 cents is a burden”<sup>4</sup>

## **6. Success stories**

For decades since early 1970s when the NLI began to operate after political and economic turbulence in 1960s, literature on school librarianship of Indonesia are full of litany of sufferings. Almost librarianship literature in Indonesia always mentioned the same litany such as lack of good reading materials, books locked in cupboard situated in the school master’s working room, no adequate budget, hardly no trained professional librarians except in elite schools, erratic library hours. This project changed the litany of suffering but not all. For the first time in 21<sup>st</sup> century, school masters, education administrators, teachers in charge of library at government primary schools voiced the importance of school library as part of education.

Aside tremendous progress as reported by the performance evaluation team, the Education and Training Consultants also found various micro-success among the beneficiary libraries. These are some of success stories on librarianship in four provinces :

(a) The project raised the school masters’ will and hope to set up better school libraries including fighting for special sties for school libraries. In the provinces South Sumatera and Bangka Belitung, 97% of school libraries are housed in separate building, formerly intended for school master’s official residences or the school janitors’ house. In those provinces, apparently the school masters and janitors have their own houses. Such situations are not common for Central Java and West Nusa Tenggara. In those provinces, school libraries occupied one class.

In the districts of Muaraenim and Baturaja, the school masters persuaded the district head to replace the school library buildings, the former because the library was flooded during rainy season owing to back up waters, while the second one because of the big flood which obliterated the whole school

In Blora District, Central Java a school library serves three villagers on two-weekly basis library day as the school situated in a road-intersection village market besides\ the students and teachers. The teacher in charge of library also successfully wrote local folklores based on his interviews with the market visitors and contributed writings on the history of Blora district.

(b) The rising initiatives among teachers in charge of library.

Two schools in island of Lombok and 5 schools in the island of Sumbawa established the library collection suited to the surroundings. The teacher in charge of library set up the collection together with class teachers on medical herbs, then they

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<sup>4</sup> Theoretically, education is free but in fact the school still charges the students, the amount varies.

planted medical plants together with the students. The results are medical herbs garden supported by books.

In school libraries found in the province of West Nusa Tenggara, it was reported by the Education and Training Consultants some teacher in charge of library initiated the set up of new books by asking students known for their abilities in writing and or drawing to write stories and illustrations. These stories and illustrations then to be bounded together, latter on stored as the library collection. In Central Java, it was reported that there are teachers in charge of library working closely with Non Government Organisations pasted the Bahasa Indonesian translation of Dutch, French and English comics donated by some donors.

The school library activities is always announced in school wall newspaper are common view in all four provinces.

( c ) Better communication between school libraries and public library.

Before the project era, there are almost no library extension service for school libraries. After the project implementation, many public libraries launched library extension for the students albeit not all of them are served by mobile library. These services are common in the province of Central Java, random services in other provinces. In Sumbawa Besar, the public library even initiated a pick up service for students from the outer areas, although the vehicle is an open truck!

( d ) More subsidies from district administration through various government services.

For the first two years after the implementation of Regional Autonomy Act, school libraries always neglected by the local governments because the school and the library are not money-yielding-institutions! This situation changed when the library development project was announced as a soft loan from World Bank then many district heads begin to realise the importance of school library and also the education although that institutions do not earning monies for the local government.

In some districts such as Blora, Magelang, Brebes, Purworejo, Kebumen (all in Central Java), Muaraenim (South Sumatera), Pangkalpinang (Bangka Belitung) the local governments initiated the local deposit acts after the school libraries denoted lack of local publications at local public libraries.

This project enabled some of the poverty-stricken-primary schools to set up simple libraries while for others various benefit gained from the project. For librarianship, especially for primary ones, adding book collection are tremendous gains. For some headmasters, they gained firm belief, inspiration to further developed their libraries through persuasion to parents, communities and Education Service to assist the library development. All are remarkable achievement after decades of sufferings. Indonesian librarianship literature always mentioned litany of suffering. The project eradicate such litany albeit there are still demands for better reading materials.

## **7. Some issues**

Although there are success stories, there are still some problems lurked in the future. The first problem is manpower. In term of manpower, the problem of school librarian or teacher librarian is the primary issue. The teacher in charge of library is still a teacher, she or he still teaches besides operating the library. In some schools there are few financial assistance, in others none. For teacher in charge of library, working in the school library is not considered an educational activity for her/his promotion. If the school master appoints a teacher to be teacher in charge of library and mistakenly called



teacher librarian [sic], the job is not recognised as professional job as dictated by the government. She or he must choose her/his profession between a teacher or a librarian. Appointing a professional librarian, those who holds a degree in Diploma of Librarianship<sup>5</sup> is an impossibility for the primary schools because they are unable to share the burden. This situation is of course an exception in many elite primary schools found in big cities. A case by case solution is hiring an administrative personnel, trained them for one or two week courses or job training in public library, then appoint her/him as assistant school librarian. This solution is found in some districts.

The second issue is the allocated budget for books and periodicals. In central Java, apparently some districts has decided to support the beneficiary schools for book budgets, alas not all districts have the same opinion. No one hopes that the activities triggered by the project will stop because of no financial assistance, albeit the Education and Training consultants predicted that between 25 to 30% of the participating school libraries will unable to buy more reading materials in the future owing to financial constraints. The majority of these schools are situated in poor areas where even a student fee of 1000 *rupiahs* or equal to 10 cent US dollar is a luxury.

The third issue is book acquisition. For school libraries in the province of Central Java going to good book shops is not quite a problems thank to good transportation facility. However, for other three provinces getting to good book shops means 3 to almost 20 hour travel by bus. Ordering by post is another choice albeit the government does not subsidize postal service for books. For book shops and school libraries, mail ordering means additional works and less discount for book buying.

The fourth issue is the continuation of the project. Based on the project progress, there are demands from other provinces for the World Bank soft loan projects for school library development. It is up to the government whether to expand the project to another provinces or not.

## 8. Post script

The NLI decided in 2004 to expand the project one year longer until the end of fiscal year 2005. The beneficiary districts are still the same and one year period will be used for improving the library services and upgrading the teachers in charge of library. Although the project covered only a few primary school libraries, only 550 school libraries out of more than 66,000 primary schools in all over Indonesia, it sparks the spirit of schoolmasters, education administrators and teachers in charge of library to raise the standard of school library for the students and teachers. The project also inspired another provinces to launch the same projects with central government assistance and direction from the NLI. The project reduce the litany of suffering commonly heard among stake holders of school librarianship. By the time of writing this paper, there are plans to expand the project to another 6 provinces beginning the fiscal year 2006.

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<sup>5</sup> Two or three years course after Senior High School

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